

INSIDE

TRACKS

STATE DOCUMENTS SELECTION

JULY 1993

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Interview: FWP Director Pat Graham

Pat Graham was appointed the 21st Director of FWP by Governor Marc Racicot early this year. Graham brings to the job 17 years of experience in the agency, including posts as Fisheries Division Administrator and Deputy Director. He lives in Helena with his wife Gail, son Brock, 13, and daughter Kayla, 9.

We asked Graham about his job, bull trout, license fees and the Yellowstone bison issue.

Editor: What has surprised you in your job so far?

Graham: I enjoy the job more than I thought I would. I think it is an important time in the Department; we've initiated the strategic management effort and completed a vision document. I believe there was a question whether this would be just a flash in the pan and we'd be off to something new with a new Director. But I was



motivated to accept this position because I feel very strongly about our direction.

My approach to the job is to recognize that I don't have all the solutions, and there are a lot of people out there that want to work to maintain our fish, wildlife and parks heritage in the state. While the Department's role is controversial in many respects, I still think there's a strong commitment to work through the issues. I like the role of trying to facilitate that, bring people together and try to resolve some of those problems.

According to Chris Hunter, special projects bureau chief for the Fisheries Division in Helena, the state is moving forward on developing a plan for bull trout recovery.

"We are moving ahead on two parallel paths," said Hunter. "First, we've

Editor: What would you say to some traditional hunters and anglers who feel they are being priced out of their heritage?

Graham: License fees for resident hunters and anglers are actually kept artificially low because of our reliance on non-residents to support much of what we do. Over two-thirds of our license dollars come from non-residents, and that allows us to keep resident fees low. But tradition plays a big role in people's expectations, and they compare with what they paid last year. However, if you look at license fees in other states, we're on the low end for residents and the high end for non-residents.

Editor: What is the state's perspective and involvement in regard to management of bull trout?

Graham: Our role in bull trout management reflects the way we'll approach endangered species issues in the future. We will do what we can to prevent the need for listing; that may require us to do some things differently than we're doing now.

The petition to list bull trout has been filed, and we are working on getting out in front and establishing the state's role in defining what we want to see in terms of populations.

We will work towards agreement (continued on Page 3)

State Takes Initiative on Trout Plan

worked with over 150 people who are concerned about bull trout in a series of meetings in Libby, Kalispell, Missoula and Deer Lodge. We solicited a great deal of public input through this process and will continue to turn to the (continued on Page 2)

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34 Women Attend Special Hunter Ed. Course

A special Hunter Education Course for Women held in Kalispell in late May proved to be a success. The course attracted 34 women, 30 of whom attended all classes and were certified.

The objective of the course was to provide training for women on safe gun handling, live firing, outdoor ethics, hunting, survival and wildlife management. The all-women course provided a comfortable learning environment for women who may not have taken the youth course.

Columbia Falls instructor Leanna Grubaugh served as lead instructor for the course. She was assisted by Hunter Education instructors from Bigfork, Kalispell, Whitefish and Columbia Falls, including: Paulette Kelleher, Terri Aldrich, Bill Archie, Paul Murphy, Tony Kastella, Leonard Howke, Richard Ulery, Steve Smith, Vinny Delgado and Samantha Bench.

Women who took the course were enthusiastic about the quality of instruction and the opportunity to share the experience with other women. One student wrote, "I think having women in a prominent role in this course is critical to conveying the idea that women can appropriately and competently hunt."

Another student wrote: "I've learned bits and pieces over the years from the men in my life, but I was able to put it all together with this class."

One purpose of holding the course was to inform women of the need for

more female instructors for the youth course. Already, three women who graduated from the course have applied to become instructors and serve as role models for girls in youth classes.



WOMEN AND THE HUNT: 34 students took the Hunter Education Course for Women held in Kalispell during late May. Instructors were (front row) first from left, Terri Aldrich, second from left Paulette Kelleher, fourth from left, lead instructor Leana Grubaugh.

State Takes Initiative On Bull Trout Plan (continued)

(continued from Page 1)
public for guidance."

Hunter said the second part of the process has involved extensive involvement of scientific experts. "We've had a series of meetings with biologists from state, federal and tribal agencies to gather biological information and formulate a recovery goal. We hope to have the draft goal out for review by this fall and have it finalized by early 1994." Hunter added that working groups would then be formed in each drainage to work on specific plans.

Many bull trout populations in

western Montana waters and in other states have declined in recent years. This decline prompted three environmental groups last October to petition the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the bull trout as an endangered species. The petition was found to have merit, and a draft ruling on whether or not to list the bull trout is expected by late fall. A one-year comment period will follow before a final ruling is issued.

The state's commitment to bull trout was emphasized in a recent letter from Governor Marc Racicot to the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In the letter Racicot stated, "The importance of bull trout Endangered Species Act listing should not be underestimated. I believe this issue represents a serious challenge to Montana, and it is important that the USFWS and the State of Montana reach an understanding that allows us to work together in a positive partnership. Through this partnership, I believe we can develop a successful bull trout recovery plan that protects Montana's native wildlife, our biological diversity and economic opportunity."

INSIDE TRACKS SUMMER 1993



FISHERIES INSERT

Cooperation Is Key To Stream Habitat Protection

If you plan on building a bridge across a stream, adding rip-rap or making any changes to a stream channel, FWP fisheries biologists would like to talk to you.

The FWP fisheries staff in Region One inspects about 300 proposed streambed alteration projects each year. FWP biologists work as team members with six conservation districts and five agencies to administer the Montana Stream Protection Act, which covers projects by government agencies, and the Montana Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act, which covers projects by private parties.

The purpose of these acts is to protect fish and wildlife resources, minimize erosion and sedimentation and protect water quality. Local review can often point out ways to improve a project. According to Fisheries Manager Jim Vashro, the streambed laws are designed to stop the incremental loss of Montana's streams.

"Over 1,000 miles of stream in Montana have been changed by



A COOPERATIVE EFFORT. Landowner William Bowd (left), Flathead Conservation District Supervisor Mike Kearney and FWP Biologist Laney Hanzel discuss a streambed project on Bowd's land along the lower Flathead River.

streambank work, channelization, culverts and other projects," said Vashro. "The loss occurs in small pieces, but really adds up."

According to Vashro, streambed

protection is the number one fisheries priority in the region. "We spend more than 50 percent of our time on streambed protection," he said.

(continued on Fisheries Insert Page 3)

Access Completed At Trout Lake For Anglers With Disabilities

Anglers with disabilities now have a new option for fishing in the Flathead, thanks to the efforts of the Canyon Sportsmen Association and the FWP Crossing the Barriers Committee.

In early June, volunteer workers completed an access pad along Trout Lake, located 30 miles from Martin City on the east side of Hungry Horse Reservoir Road. The access is designed to be accessible to people using wheel-

chairs and other devices and provides an out-of-the-way experience for disabled anglers who usually are restricted to accesses close to population centers.

Anglers wishing to take advantage of the new access should take the east side reservoir road about 30 miles and watch for the Trout Lake Access sign.

The idea was brought to the (continued on Fisheries Insert Page 4)

IN THIS INSERT

- COOPERATION KEY TO HABITAT PROTECTION
- ACCESS FOR DISABLED ANGLERS AT TROUT LAKE
- KIDS' FISHING DAY
- CATCH & RELEASE TECHNIQUES OUTLINED
- WHITEFISH RECIPES
- ANDERSON AWARD



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Wet Weather Doesn't Dampen Kids' Fishing Day

In spite of an all-day rain and bone-chilling cold, nearly 300 kids turned out June 12 for a kids' fishing day at McGilvray Lake near Bigfork.

Kids fished for rainbow trout planted in the lake by the Creston National Fish Hatchery. The annual

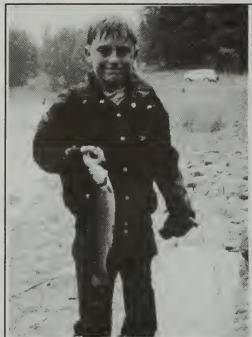
event is organized as part of National Fishing Week by the hatchery and American Legion Posts of Bigfork and Whitefish, with assistance from the U.S. Forest Service and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Kids received gift bags of fishing

tackle and information, and had the opportunity to go through an educational activity called "Pathway to Fishing," which involves angler ethics, fish biology and habitat, safety and fishing techniques. A casting contest was available also.

Most kids came to fish, and some were more prepared for the weather than others. One family set up an elaborate tarp and brought hot lunches and lawn chairs. After more than two hours of fishing, they had caught a few small perch and one nice-sized rainbow. "My daughter was excited because she caught a fish. She didn't care how big it was," the father remarked.

Four other fishing days were held for kids 12 and under around the region with cooperative efforts among FWP, USFS and civic groups and other agencies. **M**



WET, COLD, AND COMMITTED. "What rain?" ask these successful young anglers. They were part of the group of nearly 300 kids who turned out for kids' fishing day at McGilvray Lake.

Hold On To That Whitefish

Most anglers know that whitefish are excellent fighters on light tackle. But many anglers turn up their noses at the thought of eating whitefish. That's too bad, because lake whitefish are one of the best table fish in Flathead Lake, and mountain whitefish found in area streams are also tasty. Here are a few recipes featuring the whitefish. Contact FWP for more recipes and tips on catching and preparing whitefish.

Broiled Whitefish Fillets

The skin is usually removed when whitefish are filleted. If left on, place skin side down on a greased broiling rack. Dot with butter and sprinkle with lemon juice, salt, and pepper.

Preheat broiler 10 minutes. Place rack 3 inches from heat and cook 10-12 minutes for 1/2 inch fillet.

Baste frequently while cooking (1/2 c. butter, 3 T. lemon juice). Do not turn fish while broiling. Serve with tartar sauce, lemon butter, or dill sauce.

Smoked Whitefish

Clean the fish, do not scale; remove the heads. Cure 8-10 hours in a brine of 1 1/2 c. non-iodized salt per gallon of water; add brown sugar as desired. Dry, then place in a smoker. Precook at 180°F for 30 minutes. Reduce to 100°F and smoke 10-12 hours with alder or apple wood chips.

Baked Whitefish Creole

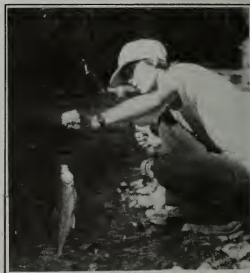
Remove the skin and cut the fish into serving pieces. Fish fillets may also be used. Place in a baking dish and add the Creole Sauce.

Creole Sauce

- 1/4 c. chopped onion
- 1/4 c. chopped celery
- 1/4 c. chopped green pepper
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 T. butter/margarine
- 1 t. salt, pepper to taste
- 2 c. canned tomatoes
- 1 bay leaf

Cook the onion, celery, green pepper and garlic in the melted butter until tender, but not brown. Mix with the remaining ingredients and pour over the fish.

Bake uncovered at 350° F for 45 minutes.



SCRAPPY AND TASTY. Mountain whitefish and lake whitefish are abundant in Flathead waters. Although maligned by many anglers, they are excellent fighters and table fish.

Tips On Proper Catch-and-Release Techniques

Out of respect for Montana fishes, many anglers practice catch-and-release. Catch-and-release fishing can provide more than just the satisfaction experienced from letting a fish go and watching it swim away. It can benefit the future health of the resource. Anglers who plan to release westslope cutthroat, or any fish, should:

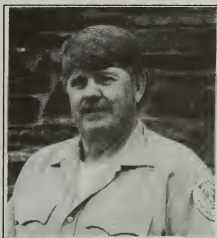
- o Avoid the use of bait. Artificial lures and flies result in lower mortality;
- o Use barbless hooks that make hook removal fast and easy;
- o Play the fish as rapidly as possible—don't play it to total exhaustion;
- o Keep the fish in the water while handling and removing the hook;
- o Remove the hook gently—don't squeeze the fish or put fingers in its gills;
- o If deeply hooked, cut the line close to the mouth. Don't yank at the hook;
- o Release the fish only after it regains its balance. If necessary, gently hold the fish upright facing the current, and slowly move it forward and backward;
- o Release the fish in quiet water close to the area where it was caught.

Anglers practicing catch and release for deep-water fish like lake trout in Flathead Lake should keep several things in mind in addition to standard techniques.

- o Bring the fish up slowly the last 30 feet to allow it to "bump;"
- o Try to keep the fish in the water at all times while removing the hook;
- o If you take pictures, hold the fish horizontally with both hands;
- o If the fish can't dive on its own, vigorously plunge it headfirst into the water;
- o If the fish still can't dive, pull it down using a clothespin or S-hook on a 50 foot cord with a weight.

Call FWP for more details.


Anderson Honored By Loon Society



Fisheries Fieldworker Gary Anderson was presented with the "Partners Award" by the Montana Loon Society at their annual meeting on June 2 in Kalispell.

Loon Society President Lynn Kelly, in presenting the award to Anderson, said, "For several years you have helped the Montana Loon Society put out floating signs needed to protect nesting loons on Upper Stillwater, Lower Stillwater, Tally and Island lakes.

We know you are very busy this time of year, yet you still fit in this work with a smile and sense of humor. We simply can't thank you enough for all you have done on our behalf."

The award is presented annually to people employed by various agencies which work cooperatively with the Loon Society in loon management efforts. 

Cooperation Key To Habitat Protection (continued)


(continued from Fisheries Insert Page 1)

FWP Biologist Laney Hanzel works on projects along the Flathead River and notes that the large, fluctuating river poses special problems. "On smaller streams we can usually predict the impact of a project and how to correct it," he said. "But the Flathead is different. It's influenced by discharges from Hungry Horse Dam and by Flathead Lake levels. And because of the power and size of the river, techniques are expensive and difficult."

Hanzel cites the example of Lybeck Dike upstream of Kalispell where extensive efforts have been required to control the river flow. Because of the special conditions on the river, a 12-agency team addresses streambed protection along its length.

"The program works through cooperation," said Hanzel. "By working together with the conservation district, the landowner and other involved agencies, we maintain a consistent approach to streambed protection. We

can usually find a solution by working together."

According to Vashro, streambed protection work slows the degradation of Montana's streams, but more needs to be done. "When stream habitat is damaged, it can take decades to recover," he said. "Only in the last few years have we begun to develop programs to repair the damage. Eventually, we may be able to reverse the tide." 

Access Completed At Trout Lake (continued)

(continued from Fisheries Insert Page 1)
Region 1 FWP Crossing the Barriers Committee by members of the Canyon Sportsmen last year. Committee members agreed that such a project would fill a need for a quality angling experience for anglers with disabilities.

According to Cliff Nelson, president of Canyon Sportsmen, the access was a grassroots effort. "We saw a need to help and felt this was a perfect spot for disabled access and fisheries improvements," he said. "This is an example of what can be done if everyone pitches in for a good cause."

Columbia Falls artist Joan Hula completed a painting to raise money

for the effort. As it turned out, most of the materials and all of the labor for the Trout Lake project were donated, so remaining dollars raised by the painting raffle will be used on projects at Lion Lake and Smith Lake.

Canyon Sportsmen Association donated equipment operation, dozens of hours of volunteer labor and cement. Workers included: Cliff, Junior, Nancy, Jay, Randy, Annalisha and Andrew Nelson; Ken Chomo, Mike Clanton, Jim Sharsu, Tom Heider and Kim Lyman.

Several other members of the Crossing the Barriers Committee also helped, and the U.S. Forest Service contributed planning expertise.

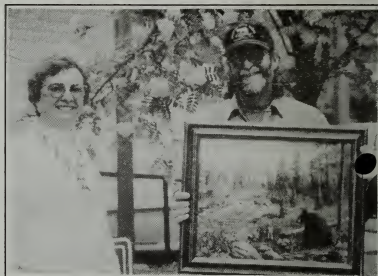
Signs were provided by FWP and Signs Now, and posts were contributed by Larry Wilson.

Montanans for Multiple Use, Canyon Sportsmen Association, Flathead Wildlife and other members of the Crossing the Barriers Committee assisted with the raffle.

As part of the project, and part of the Hungry Horse Mitigation effort, westslope cutthroat trout were stocked in Trout Lake to bolster the existing fishery and increase the proportion of native westslope cutthroat genes. A small tributary to the lake will be improved for spawning next year.



A GRASSROOTS PROJECT. Cliff Nelson, president of the Canyon Sportsmen, works on the Trout Lake access pad. Many hours of volunteer labor have helped provide better access for sportspersons with disabilities.



AND THE WINNER IS... Dan Rose of Hungry Horse (right) who was the winner of the painting donated by artist Joan Hula. The raffle raised about \$600 to improve access at local lakes for anglers with disabilities.

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**Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



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Interview: FWP Director Pat Graham (continued)

(continued from Page 1)

with other agencies, scientists and the public. Then we need to establish how far we are from our wildlife population goals, and decide on what we can do to get there.

Ultimately an approach like that can either help show we don't need to list the species, or if the species does need to be listed, the approach will show what is needed to remove it from the list. That's something that should be established up front; then we can take constructive steps to recovering the bull trout.

Editor: What's the status of the effort right now?

Graham: We've initiated a working group made up of many people around western Montana to establish a management goal and ultimately write a management plan.

Editor: How important is the bull trout in your view?

Graham: We recognized the importance of conserving bull trout a long time ago when we closed spawning tributaries to angling in the 1950s. In

much of its range it is not viewed as a sportfish as much as it is viewed as a significant sportfish. But it is a native species and has been on the state's Species of Special Concern list for a long while. It is also viewed as an important gamefish and a premier fish species in the Flathead.

Editor: The Yellowstone bison issue has been very controversial. What are your thoughts on that?

Graham: We're doing a programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on bison with the National Park Service, Montana Department of Livestock and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and decisions on bison management will be made after that's completed. The EIS will have a range of options for the public to consider.

It's a very difficult social issue. Essentially what the state ends up doing is shooting the animals migrating out of the park and not managing a population in the traditional way. Some people see the moratorium on the hunting of bison as a threat to the long-term future of hunting. I don't have that

same concern because I don't think that the way we are forced to manage bison is the same as we manage other species because they are in a national park.

We have to decide collectively if what we do there is a sport hunt or a control action. There is a strong feeling that shooting Yellowstone bison has done considerable damage to the image of hunting in this country.

Editor: So you're not ruling out the possibility that hunters could harvest bison again?

Graham: Right, but it's more complicated than do you or don't you hunt. Bison are not free-ranging animals outside Yellowstone Park. It may be possible that hunting could be used in one part of their range but not in another. Part of the frustration comes from the role of government in the control action. What role should the Park Service play in regulating bison numbers within the park? There is a range of options that are being considered, and they'll be presented to the public before we act.

State Wildlife Lab Finds High Trichinosis Levels in R-1 Bears

Over 80 percent of the grizzly bears and 20 percent of the black bears tested from northwest Montana were found to carry trichinosis. These levels are significantly higher than the statewide average.

A pamphlet available at FWP offices displays results of a study on trichinosis levels in Montana black and grizzly bears. The pamphlet was produced by the FWP Wildlife Lab in cooperation with Montana State University.

Trichinosis is a parasitic disease of humans and other mammals resulting from ingestion of muscleworm larvae in infected animal tissue.

Meat samples from hunter-killed bears can be submitted for free testing. Mailer envelopes for this purpose are available at any FWP office.

Hunters who harvest black bear and plan to eat the meat should cook the meat at temperatures exceeding 165° F. Freezing or curing meat will

not kill the larvae.

Wildlife Lab Supervisor Keith Aune cites the trichinosis survey as a good example of the kind of service the Lab offers Montana sportspersons. "We function with others as a laboratory network," said Aune. "We analyze patterns of wildlife diseases and address issues important to public and livestock health."

Aune noted that the Lab has processed over 50,000 specimens in its 38 years of operation. Lab personnel also catalogue grizzly and mountain lion mortalities and populations, determine ages and sexes for various wildlife specimens submitted by biologists and others and perform animal necropsies.

Hunters and trappers play a big role in the Lab's success, according to Aune. "We function effectively and for a low cost because hunters and trappers turn in their furbearer carcasses and animal teeth for aging and their meat for testing," he said.



WILDLIFE LABORATORY Supervisor Keith Aune and Biologist Phil Schladweiler coordinate and process thousands of wildlife samples each year from across Montana. Recently the laboratory has found high levels of trichinosis levels in both grizzly and black bears in northwest Montana.

Grizzly Bear Management Comes of Age

On May 1, the Department transferred Tim Manley from the South Fork Grizzly Study to a position as the Region's Westside Grizzly Bear Management Specialist. His job is patterned after a similar position on the East Front.

Tim's appointment is just one indication of the ongoing efforts of the Department to improve grizzly management in some creative and innovative ways.

Our emphasis is now on the prevention of conflicts between humans and grizzlies. Our strategy of relocating grizzlies after they become a problem has not usually been a permanent solution. Preventing the conflicts between people and bears in the first place is the much preferred alternative.

We have found that the Eastside Grizzly Management Specialist position has brought some new solutions to old problems. For instance, beehives, sheep, cattle and even geese have been the target of the opportunistic grizzly on ranches along the Rocky Mountain front.

Over the past years, the Department, working closely with livestock producers and bee keepers, has set about seeking long-term solutions to those ever-present depredation problems. As a result, specialized high voltage electric fences have proven to be 100 percent successful.

Similar efforts to deal with bear attractants can, we believe, be successful here on the west side, too. For example, electric fencing around the garbage dumpsters near Essex may be an option for dealing with grizzly problems there. We look

concerns and advice and seek their support and trust.

Special thanks go to all the groups, agencies and organizations associated with the Burlington Northern Environmental Stewardship Area (BNESA). Without the contributions




Grizzly Bear management Specialist Tim Manley accepts an award from Amy O'Herron of Brown Bear Resources. Said O'Herron, "Tim's commitment to grizzly bears and to working with people in bear habitat has been outstanding."

forward to Tim Manley's expertise and dedication to help us use these and other creative techniques in our management.

This project is funded for three years, after which we will measure our success to determine if more work is necessary.

Common to both the east and west side is the need for the Department to take into consideration the needs of the local citizenry, to listen to their

and encouragement from these organizations, this program would not be possible.

Our friends with BNESA include Burlington Northern Railroad, Flathead National Forest, Glacier National Park, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Association, Montana Department of Transportation, Flathead and Glacier counties, Montana Wildlife Federation, the Blackfoot Tribe and several citizen advisory members. 

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